

Message Text

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ACTION DHA-02

INFO OCT-01 EA-10 IO-13 ISO-00 AID-05 OMB-01 TRSE-00
IGA-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06
/080 W
-----099063 192046Z /63

R 191125Z AUG 77
FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5339
INFO USMISSION GENEVA
USUN NEW YORK 1825

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E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: SREF, TH
SUBJECT: THAI PLAN TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN BONA FIDE AND
NON BONA FIDE INDOCHINESE REFUGEES

REF: BANGKOK 18304

1. BANGKOK POST AUG 19 CARRIED ARTICLE REPORTING
INTERVIEW WITH DAMRONG SUNTHORNSARATUN, DEPUTY UNDER
SECRETARY OF INTERIOR, TO EFFECT THAT THAILAND WILL
CLASSIFY ALL FUTURE INDOCHINESE REFUGEES INTO TWO
CATEGORIES: 1) THOSE WHOSE LIVES ARE IN DANGER, AND
2) THE REMAINDER, WHO WILL BE CONSIDERED " ILLEGAL
ALIENS." FIRST CATEGORY WILL CONTINUE TO QUALIFY FOR
UN PROTECTION. "ILLEGAL ALIENS" WILL BE HOUSED IN
THAI GOVERNMENT-RUN CAPMS, FUNDS FOR WHICH WILL COME
FROM THAI BUDGET. EXISTING UN-SUPPORTED CAMPS WILL
CONTINUE TO OPERATE SEPARATELY FROM RTG-SUPPORTED
CAMPS.

2. EMBOFF REVIEWED ARTICLE AUG 19 WITH DAMRONG, WHO CONFIRMED THAT IT WAS ESSENTIALLY CORRECT. DAMRONG SAID THAT
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UNDER THAI-UNHCR AGREEMENT SIGNED JULY 22 IN GENEVA A
DISTINCTION WILL BE MADE BETWEEN PERSONS WHO QUALIFY FOR
UN PROTECTION (BONA FIDE REFUGEES) AND THOSE WHO LEAVE
THEIR COUNTRY FOR REASONS OF PERSONAL CONVENIENCE, SUCH AS
"ECONOMIC MIGRANTS" (NON BONA FIDE REFUGEES).
DAMRONG ADDED THAT CABINET HAD APPROVED THE AGREEMENT BUT
THAT BUDGET FUNDS TO SET UP CLASSIFICATION MACHINERY AND

CAMPS TO HOLD NON BONA FIDE REFUGEES HAVE NOT RPT NOT YET BEEN MADE AVAILABLE. IN RESPNSE TO A QUESTION, HE SAID HE HOPED IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE TO START THE PROGRAM BY NOV 1 AND IN ANY CASE IT WOULD NEED TO BE STARTED BEFORE THE PRESENT AGREEMENT EXPIRED ON DEC 31. DAMRONG SAID THAT THE RTG PLANS TO SET UP THREE OF ITS OWN REFUGEE CAMPS (FOR "ILLEGAL ALIENS"), ONE IN NORTHERN THAILAND, ONE IN NORTHEAST, AND ONE IN GENERAL AREA OF CAMBODIAN BORDER. SPECIFIC SITES HAVE NOT RPT NOT YET BEEN SELECTED.

3. DAMRONG CONCEDED THAT IT WILL BE VERY DIFFICULT TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN BONA FIDE AND NON BONA FIDE REFUGEES. EMBOFF POINTED OUT THAT, REGARDLESS OF THE MOTIVATONS WHICH INSPIRED REFUGEES TO LEAVE THEIR COUNTRIES, IT WILL PROBABLY BE HIGHLY DANGEROUS FOR THEM TO RETURN TO THOSE COUNTRIES, AS THE AUTHORITIES ARE LIKELY TO REGARD THEM AS IMPERIALIST AGENTS. DAMRONG AGREED THAT THIS WAS LIKELY TO BE THE CASE.

4. COMMENT: THIS PROGRAM CLEARLY WILL NOT RPT NOT GET UNDER WAY IN IMMEDIATE FUTURE. IT APEARS TO US THAT RTG WANTS TO GET REFUGEE FLOW UNDER ITS DIRECT CONTROL, PERFORMING CLASSIFIECATION FUNCTION AND MOVING BULK OF REFUGEES INTO CAMPS OTHER THAN THOSE OPERATED WITH UNHCR SUPPORT. WHAT ULTIMATE DISPOSITION WILL BE OF REFUGEES IN CAMPS OPERATED WITH RTG FUNDS ONLY IS NOT CONFIDENTIAL

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RPT NOT APPARENT AT THIS POINT.
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Message Attributes

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Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
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Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 19-Aug-1977 12:00:00 am
Decapton Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decapton Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Executive Order: GS
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